

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DHAHRA 00003 030716Z
ACTION NEA-10

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE DHAHRAN 0003

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, BENC, BTIO, SA
SUBJECT: WELL-ESTABLISHED SAUDI COMPANY SEEKS US PARTNER
TO CAPTURE CONTRACT TO BUILD BAHRAIN CAUSEWAY

REF: MANAMA 2041

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED:

1. POST HAS BEEN APPROACHED BY TWO FAMILY MEMBERS OF ABDEL
HADI AL-QAHTANI GROUP OF COMPANIES TO ASCERTAIN IF T. L.
JAMES COMPANY, INC., 300 CROFTEN STREET, KENNER, NEW ORLEANS,
WILLING TO CONSIDER FORMING JOINT VENTURE WITH AL-QAHTANI.
PURPOSE OF JOINT VENTURE WOULD BE TO CAPTURE CONTRACT TO BUILD
BAHRAIN CAUSEWAY (SEE SITREP CONTAINED IN REFTEL) AND POSSIBLY
TWO HIGHWAY PROJECTS. AL-QAHTANI UNDERSTANDS THAT T. L.
JAMES HAS HAD CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE IN CONSTRUCTION OF
CAUSEWAYS (OR SIMILAR ENGINEERING PROJECTS) IN MISSISSIPPI
DELTA AREA AND BELIEVES IT IS THEREFORE IDEALLY SUITED TO
HANDLE PROJECT. AL-QAHTANI IS INTERESTED IN TALKING WITH OTHER
US COMPANIES IF T. L. JAMES HAS LITTLE INTEREST IN OVERSEAS
WORK. MEMBER OF AL-QAHTANI FAMILY WILLING TO TRAVEL TO US
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PAGE 02 DHAHRA 00003 030716Z

SOONEST TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE JOINT VENTURE AGREEMENT WITH
T. L. JAMES OR OTHER INTERESTED US CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES.

2. POST IS CURRENTLY PREPARING NEW WTDR ON AL-QAHTANI.
MOST RECENT WTDR WAS TRANSMITTED AS 75 DHAHRAN 0309. ALSO,
SEE DHAHRAN 1341 WHICH IS WTDR ON ONE OF LARGEST UNITS OF
AL-QAHTANI GROUP OF COMPANIES. AL-QAHTANI IS LARGE MULTI-

SIDED COMPANY WITH ONE OF THE BEST REPUTATIONS IN EASTERN PROVINCE. COMPANY HAS SEVERAL JOINT VENTURES WITH US COMPANIES AND REPRESENTS A NUMBER OF FIRMS, LIKE CARRIER, DRESSER, REED TOOL AND GOODYEAR WHICH DO LARGE VOLUME OF BUSINESS IN SAUDI ARABIA. END UNCLASSIFIED.

3. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE; AL-QAHTANI FEELS THAT IT HAS INSIDE TRACK TO WIN CONTRACT IF IT CAN ASSOCIATE WITH REPUTABLE AND WELL-ESTABLISHED US COMPANY EXPERIENCED IN CAUSEWAY-TYPE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS. AL-QAHTANI CLAIMS TO HAVE FORMED SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH SON OF CROWN PRINCE FAHD, AND IT BELIEVES THAT THIS CONNECTION WILL BE MATERIAL TO GAINING CONTRACT. WE CANNOT CONFIRM THIS ASPECT BUT WE DO KNOW THAT AL-QAHTANI HAS ALWAYS HAD GOOD CONNECTIONS IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS, THE SAG MINISTRY CHARGED WITH AWARDED BAHRAIN CAUSEWAY PROJECT. FINALLY, WHILE WE REGARD AL-QAHTANI AS ONE OF THE VERY BEST COMPANIES IN EASTERN PROVINCE, WE SHOULD CAUTION THAT ITS RECORD AS A JOINT-VENTURE PARTNER DOES LEAVE SOMETHING TO BE DESIRED AS FAR AS DAILY OPERATIONAL SUPPORT IS CONCERNED. IN BRIEF, AL-QAHTANI, AS IS THE CASE WITH MANY SAUDI FIRMS, CAN AND DOES GET THE BUSINESS FOR ITS FOREIGN PARTNERS BUT DOES LITTLE TO AID THEM ON DAY-TO-DAY BASIS DURING THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION STAGE. AS LONG AS PARTNER RECOGNIZES THIS LIMITATION BEFORE SIGNING JOINT VENTURE AGREEMENT, AND PLANS ACCORDINGLY, THE VENTURE SHOULD PROSPER.
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